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**CLINTON ADMINISTRATION TO PRESS FOR CONTINUED PROGRESS
UNDER U.S.- CANADA AGRICULTURE AGREEMENT**

United States Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky and Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman today announced the formation of an interagency team to monitor implementation of the recent agricultural trade agreement with Canada. U.S. farmers and ranchers have already begun to see the benefits of the agreement, which was concluded on December 4, 1998.

The interagency team is composed of representatives from the U.S. Trade Representative's office, U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Economic Council, U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the U.S. Customs Service. The team will ensure that Canada meets its obligations to implement the agreement which is intended to eliminate many disincentives to trade in agricultural products. A special subgroup of the interagency task force will monitor imports of Canadian wheat under a new program to collect and scrutinize Canadian wheat import data. That program will be operational by early February and is intended to provide additional insights into pricing practices of the Canadian Wheat Board.

"As we said in December, the Clinton Administration is committed to ensure that agricultural trade is conducted on fair terms for our growers and ranchers," said United States Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky. "We are going to continue to work with our agricultural industries to address their concerns. I am pleased that we have seen some progress in December, but we view the agreement and the results to date as a work in progress."

"Today's action confirms that the United States' December 4 announcement is just the first step in the ongoing effort to ensure free and fair trade between the two countries," stated Glickman.

Successes to date of the December 4 agreement include:

- Phytosanitary certificates have been issued for over 25.5 million pounds of North Dakota wheat and barley to transit Canada's rail system. Access to the Canadian rails provides

U.S. shippers an important transportation alternative. Montana and Minnesota will be ready to participate in the program in mid-January.

- Canada eliminated its quarantine requirement on U.S. live hogs enabling U.S. producers to ship hogs to Canadian slaughter facilities once market conditions and other factors are conducive to trade.
- Effective January 4, 1999, Canada implemented a new program allowing North Dakota and Montana farmers to truck wheat to Canadian primary elevators. Shipments are expected to start moving soon.